What is claimed is:

1. In a telephone communications system comprising a plurality of mobile telephone stations, a plurality of base stations interfaced for wireless communications with the plurality of mobile stations, and a mobile switching center connected in a mobile telephone network to the base stations for controlling wireless telephone communications, a method for processing an incoming call from a caller for a mobile telephone station subscriber in response to receipt of the incoming call at a home or gateway mobile switching center for the subscriber, the method comprising the steps of:

determining whether the called mobile station subscriber subscribes to an alternative ringback feature,

establishing a call path to the caller between the subscriber mobile switching center and an audio content server if the mobile station subscriber subscribes to the alternative ringback feature;

transmitting a preselected audio presentation from the audio content server to the caller in lieu of audible ringback signals;

identifying the call location of the called subscriber station;

extending a call leg from the subscriber mobile switching center to the subscriber station or a subscriber call forwarding station;

in response to an answer of the call by the subscriber station or a subscriber call forwarding station, disconnecting the audio content server from the caller and connecting the caller to the call leg.

2. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the step of determining whether the called mobile station subscriber subscribes to an alternative ringback feature comprises querying a home location register.

3. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the step of identifying comprises querying a home location register.

4. A method as recited in claim 3, wherein the subscriber station is in a roaming location and the step of identifying further comprises establishing a temporary routing number for the subscriber station.

5. A method as recited in claim 3, wherein the step of establishing a call path to the audio content server comprises determining the network address of the audio content server from information contained in the home location register.

6. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the step of transmitting a preselected audio presentation comprises accessing one of a plurality of stored audio presentations on the basis of subscriber identified criteria.

7. A method as recited in claim 6, wherein the subscriber identified criteria is related to the identity of the caller.

8. A method as recited in claim 6, wherein the subscriber identified criteria is related to the geographical location of the caller.

9. A method as recited in claim 6, wherein the subscriber identified criteria is related to the time of day of the incoming call to the subscriber mobile switching center.

10. A method as recited in claim 6, wherein the transmitted audio presentation is a musical selection.

11. A method as recited in claim 6, wherein the transmitted audio presentation is a prerecorded message.

12. A mobile telephone communications system comprising:

a plurality of base stations interfaced for wireless communications with a plurality of mobile stations;

a mobile switching center connected in a mobile telephone network to the base stations for controlling wireless telephone communications;

a home location register coupled to the mobile telephone network and having stored therein identification of mobile stations subscribed to the alternative ringback feature; and

an audio content server coupled to the mobile telephone network; wherein

in response to receipt of an incoming call at the mobile switching center, determination is made whether the called mobile station subscriber subscribes to an alternative ringback feature by a query to the home location register,

a call path is established to the caller between the subscriber mobile switching center and an audio content server if the mobile station subscriber subscribes to the alternative ringback feature;

a preselected audio presentation is transmitted from the audio content server to the caller in lieu of audible ringback signals;

the call location of the called subscriber station is identified;

a call leg is extended from the subscriber mobile switching center to the subscriber station or a subscriber call forwarding station; and

in response to an answer of the call by the subscriber station or a subscriber call forwarding station, the audio content server is disconnected from the caller and the caller is connected to the call leg.

13. A telecommunications system as recited in claim 12, wherein the audio content server comprises a plurality of stored audio presentations available for selection by subscribers to the alternative ringback feature to be transmitted during an incoming call and storage means for associating subscribers with selected audio presentations.

14. A telecommunications system as recited in claim 12, wherein the storage means contains subscriber identified criteria associating a plurality of stored presentations with a subscriber to the alternative ringback feature.

15. A telecomunications system as recited in claim 14, wherein the subscriber identified criteria is related to the identity of the caller.

16. A telecommunications system as recited in claim 14, wherein the subscriber identified criteria is related to the geographical location of the caller.

17. A telecommunications system as recited in claim 14, wherein the subscriber identified criteria is related to the time of day of the incoming call to the subscriber mobile switching center.

18. A method as recited in claim 12, wherein the transmitted audio presentation is a musical selection.

19. A method as recited in claim 12, wherein the transmitted audio presentation is a prerecorded message.